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Letter dated 31 October 2008 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the additional requirements requested for the Mission in the light of the persistent crisis in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. As you will recall, Alan Doss, my Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, outlined these additional requirements during the Security Council consultations on 3 October 2008. At the request of Security Council members, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations also presented a detailed technical brief on the additional requirements to Council members on 8 October 2008.

By its presidential statement of 29 October 2008 (S/PRST/2008/40), the Security Council duly noted the reinforcement of MONUC requested by the Secretariat and expressed its intention to expeditiously study that request in view of the developments of the situation on the ground.

In this regard, an explanatory note dated 31 October 2008 by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the additional requirements for MONUC is attached to the present letter (see annex).

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

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Annex to the letter dated 31 October 2008 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

Explanatory note by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations regarding the additional requirements for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Background

1. By its resolutions 1756 (2007) and 1794 (2007), the Security Council requested the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to attach the highest priority to addressing the crisis in the Kivus in all its dimensions. In the same resolutions, the Council provided the Mission with an extensive mandate to, inter alia, ensure the protection of civilians and humanitarian personnel; contribute to the improvement of the security conditions in which humanitarian assistance is provided; assist in the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons; deter any attempt at the use of force by foreign and Congolese armed groups to threaten the political process; support operations led by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), including disarming the recalcitrant armed groups in order to ensure their participation in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration process; facilitate the voluntary demobilization and repatriation of disarmed foreign combatants; provide, in the short term, basic training to FARDC deployed in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo; and protect United Nations personnel and facilities, and ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel.

2. Since the adoption of the mandate resolutions referred to above, developments on the ground have resulted in a significant increase in the number and complexity of tasks performed by MONUC. The Goma process led to additional tasks for the Mission, including support for its implementation, as well as the implementation of the disengagement plan proposed by MONUC following the resumed fighting last August. In addition, the resumption of conflict in Ituri and in Haute-Uele has placed additional burdens on the Mission, stretching its capacity beyond the limit. These additional tasks thinly stretched the Mission's deployment and left the Mission without a reserve force. Furthermore, the current crisis emanating from the recent offensive by the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP) clearly underscored that the resources available to the Mission are not commensurate with the security challenges on the ground, thereby putting in question the credibility of the United Nations and the international community, which has invested so much in bringing peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The priority to protect Goma through a series of reinforcements has significantly reduced the MONUC presence in other critical areas of the country.

3. On 3 October, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Alan Doss, outlined to the Security Council the additional capacities that MONUC requires in order to respond to the emerging multiple demands to effectively implement its mandate. At the request of Council members, on 8 October the Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided a detailed technical briefing at the expert level

on these additional requirements and on the envisaged reconfiguration plans for MONUC.

Reconfiguration of the Mission

4. The international community's position is unanimous regarding the dire consequences of the fall of Goma to CNDP rebels on the overall situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region. In view of the near total disintegration of the FARDC in the face of advancing CNDP troops, MONUC has become the only organized force in Goma and has been compelled to step in to substitute for the role of the national security forces.

5. The measures taken to reinforce the MONUC presence in Goma have increased its troop strength in the city to some 1,500 troops. In addition, two companies are deployed as part of the forward defence line north of the city on the Rutshuru-Goma axis. A special forces company from the Ituri brigade has also been redeployed to Goma, along with the repositioning of two attack helicopters, from the Ituri and South Kivu brigades. A South African company currently based in Ngungu is also being redeployed to Goma. Additionally, the area of responsibility of the South Kivu brigade has been expanded northwards in the southern area of North Kivu in order to relieve units of the MONUC North Kivu brigade, which will be redirected to tasks in the Goma area. Additional redeployments from within the Mission are also being considered.

6. The above redeployments conducted in response to the current crisis have dovetailed into the rebalancing of the force which was already under way to enhance the Mission's effectiveness and increase its focus and activities towards the Kivus. This rebalancing of the force was being conducted in the context of support for the implementation of the disengagement plan, in particular the creation of separation zones, as well as support for the United Nations stabilization strategy for eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Additional capacities required for the effective implementation of the mandate

7. The required additional capacities identified below are intended to achieve the following specific objectives: (a) give MONUC the lacking quick response capability that would have enabled it to effectively respond to the current crisis; (b) ensure that the Mission has adequate mobility to enable it to move troops to any crisis point in a timely manner; (c) give the Mission the capability to carry out essential engineering work in sensitive areas where civilian engineering contractors cannot operate; and (d) ensure that the Mission has the necessary surveillance capabilities in terms of both equipment and personnel. These additional capabilities are critical for the Mission's ability to carry out tasks that would enable the parties to progress within the ceasefire and disengagement phases to the demobilization phase of the peace process. If the armed groups and the FARDC comply with the disengagement plan and return to the implementation of the Goma and Nairobi processes in good faith, it is envisaged that the surge capacity requested below will be required for a period of approximately nine months.

(a) Two infantry battalions (850 each) would be initially deployed to stabilize the situation in North Kivu. Along with these two battalions, two special forces companies (150 each) would constitute the Mission's rapid reaction force and reserve, enabling the Mission to respond to crises as they arise, without

compromising or weakening its presence elsewhere. While this rapid reaction force would be based in the Goma area, the nature of its tasks would require it to be highly mobile.

(b) In order to enhance the operational mobility of MONUC, additional air assets are required, namely, 18 utility helicopters (260 personnel, including crew and ground staff) and two C-130 Hercules aircraft (50 personnel, including crew and ground staff). These additional air assets would be based in North and South Kivu. Tasks for the assets would include: heavy and medium lift transportation requirement; air mobility for lifting units into areas for military operations; logistic support to isolated mobile operating bases and company operating bases; medical evacuation and casualty evacuation; extraction and evacuation of United Nations and other international personnel under imminent danger.

(c) A rapid reaction force/special forces would provide the surge needed by the Mission until the first phase of the disengagement plan is completed, including the establishment of the zones of separation, disengagement of troops, assembly, demobilization and disarmament of combatants.

(d) Additional information analysis capability is also needed for advanced information collation, analysis and dissemination to enhance situational awareness and to enable timely decision-making. This would include external imagery/electronic equipment and associated analysis structure. The strength implications would be an augmentation of approximately 50 personnel. This capacity would also be based in the Goma area.

(e) One engineer company (175) is needed to support the above-mentioned surge requirements and to execute horizontal engineering works to improve the ground mobility of MONUC forces. The company would operate in sensitive areas where civilian engineering contractors cannot be deployed.

(f) A total of 200 military training instructors/advisers are requested to support and enhance MONUC's ongoing training programmes to the FARDC.

(g) Two additional formed police units are also required (150 each) in order to relieve MONUC military units which are currently diverted to static and force protection tasks. It would also enhance the Mission's capability to protect United Nations personnel and facilities in major population centres. Both formed police units would be deployed in North Kivu.

8. These additional capacities would result in an increase of 2,785 to the MONUC authorized military strength, and 300 to its formed police unit strength.